

**THE NECESSITY OF VENGEANCE REFLECTED IN ALEXANDRE
DUMAS' *THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO* (1844):
A PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITICISM**



PUBLICATION ARTICLE

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Getting Bachelor Degree of Education
in English Department**

Proposed by

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2014



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ALEXANDRE DUMAS' THE COUNT OF MONTE
CRISTO (1844): A PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITICISM

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**THE NECESSITY OF VENGEANCE REFLECTED IN ALEXANDRE
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ABSTRACT

RIZAL MAHFUDIN. A 320 100 275. THE NECESSITY OF VENGEANCE REFLECTED IN ALEXANDRE DUMAS' *THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO* (1844): A PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITICISM. RESEARCH PAPER. MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA.

This research aims at analyzing necessity of vengeance in the Count of Monte Cristo novel by using Psychoanalytic Criticism. The major problem in this research is to describe how necessity of vengeance is reflected in Alexandre Dumas' the Count of Monte Cristo. The research consists of two objectives: analyzing the novel based on structural elements and analyzing the novel based on psychoanalytic criticism. This study uses qualitative research. The object of the study is the Count of Monte Cristo novel written by Alexandre Dumas. There are two kinds of data source: primary and secondary. The primary data source is the text of the novel Alexandre Dumas's Count of Monte Cristo and the secondary data sources are some books and article related to the subject. The method of collecting data in the research is library research by summarizing, paraphrasing, and documenting the data. In analyzing the data, the writer applies descriptive analysis. The result of the research is that based on psychoanalytic analysis, the main character, Count of Monte Cristo, is a man who has a pleasure seeking personality.

Keywords: vengeance, psychoanalytic, necessity, pleasure, personality.

A. Introduction

Vengeance is a harm committed to guilty people as the punishment for harm that they have executed to that person or related one. An affair of exacting vengeance frequently occurs in society as a kind of destructive social problem. This disease is unplayful problem because this affair can destabilize and harass social tranquility. Majority of problems motivated by vengeance desire tend to be violent and crime. Therefore, this destructive affair becomes serious concern for many parties, for example: psychologists, psychiatrists, criminologists, and artists. To artists, the phenomenon of vengeance is a dangerous problem in society. Thus, to express their concern about this affair, they then make master piece reflecting this problem in novels, poetry, and songs. There are many novels raising this issue, and one of them is *Count of Monte Cristo* novel written by Alexandre Dumas.

His novel *the Count of Monte Cristo* is a novel from French. This great novel was complete in 1844 and consisted of 1276 pages. It is published by Penguin classics. The story takes place in France, Italy, islands in the Mediterranean, and in the Levant during the historical events of 1815–1838. The Count of Monte Cristo is a kind of adventure novel which is primarily storied about forgiveness, hope, justice, mercy, and vengeance.

There are some literature reviews concerning with *The Count of Monte Cristo* written by Alexandre Dumas. Grace Tjahjaputri (2002) with her thesis entitled *a Study of Edmond Dantes's Character Change before the Denunciation, after the Denunciation, and after the Revenge in Alexandre Dumas's the Count of Monte Cristo*. She concludes that taking revenge does not always bring satisfaction for the doers. Finally, vengeance makes a man's character become worse. Heith Copes' research (2007) entitles *Street Justice: Retaliation in the Criminal Underworld*. In his research, he concluded that the authors' writing style, insights, and analyses coupled with offenders' personal accounts successfully bring the reader into the criminal underworld so that we can understand the pressures and constraints associated with street vengeance. Those interested in qualitative criminology will find it a valuable resource.

Latifah's research paper (2005) entitles *Personality of the Main Character "Edmond Dantes" as Reflected in Alexandre Dumas' the Count of Monte Cristo*. She concludes that the environment surrounding the main character "Edmond Dantes" influenced the main character's personality. The other thesis is from Antonius Christopher (2009) entitled *Edmond Dantes' changing concept of justice in Alexandre Dumas' The Count of Monte Cristo*. He concludes that Edmond Dantes' case shows that retributive justice is not a perfect concept of justice because it will create another trouble. On one hand, restorative justice can give the solution to the problem.

This main issue of this research is necessity of vengeance experienced by the main character named Count of Monte Cristo. It is analyzed by using psychoanalytic approached proposed by Freud. Psychoanalysis is the most famous theory of psychology. It is a branch of psychological study concerning with personality of human being.

Freud then divides the structure of personality into three levels, namely: *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. The human behavior is created because there are interactions among the three. Roughly, *Id* represents "inhibited impulses". It has orientation on avoiding pain and pursuing pleasure (pleasure principle) (Pervin, 1984: 76). The *superego* represents "the voice of conscience". This structure functions to control behavior in accordance with the rules of society and reward and punishment. The *ego* represents "rational thinking" (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 33). *Ego* can be said as executor or manager of personality that decides what kind of instinct will be satisfied and how to satisfy.

B. Research Method

In this research, the writer uses qualitative research. The steps to conduct the research are determining the type of the study, the object of the study, data and data source, technique of data collection, and technique of data analysis. The object of the study is necessity of vengeance reflected in Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844). It is analyzed by using a psychoanalytic approach.

There are two data sources needed to conduct this research. They are primary data sources and secondary data sources. The source of primary data is *Alexandre Dumas' The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844), while the sources of secondary data are from other sources related the study, such as: website, dictionary, and some books which support the research. The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It relates to structural elements of the novel named *Alexandre Dumas' The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844). The techniques of collecting data are reading novel and note taking.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Finding

Count of Monte Cristo is the main character who most suffers in the novel. His suffering due to the torture and inappropriately behavior by his offender makes conflict among *Id*, *ego*, and *superego* which influences his mental condition.

The first *Id* arises when Dantes is looking at the sea and Marseilles. The *Id* wants to get pleasure by asking him to imagine the death and asking to plunge into the sea.

The next *Id* emerges again when Dantes wants to meet the inspector of Chateau D'If to tell his mistake. He wants to prove that he is innocent and wrongly captured. He asks him to be freed. However, the inspector does not believe in and decides to leave him. The *Id* then makes Dantes want to be angry.

The fifth *Id* arises when Count is suffering and loses hope to live. The *Id* wants to get pleasure by getting his revenge in order to makes his enemies feel his suffering.

The sixth *Id* comes when Dantes wants to tell Mercedes about his condition in prison. He wants to know that he is in despair and is arrested in Chateau D'If. He wants to makes sure his father and Mercedes relief after hearing his message.

The seventh *Id* arises when Dantes wants to fulfill his hunger and find safety from the guards of Chateau D'If, because he is stranded in the

sea. The *Id* asks him to lie that his ship is sunk so he can get the food and be safe from the guards.

The eighth *Id* comes when he is in Fernand de Morcerf's mansion. The *Id* wants him to refuse any nourishment served by Morcerf's family.

The ninth *Id* arises again when Dantes is visited by Mercedes in Count's house. The *Id* wants to avoid his pain by cursing the enemies who make him suffer. The *Id* also says that he must revenge for his self and kills Albert de Morcerf.

The last *Id* appears when Count is with Danglars and Luigi Vampa in Bandit's nest. The *Id* wants to fulfill his pleasure by punishing, kidnapping, and bankrupting Danglars. He bankrupts Danglars by asking him to go to Italy and then takes all his money.

The first *superego* appears to stop the *Id* which wants to get pleasure by asking him to plunge into the sea. The *superego* uses religious power to stop it. The *superego* says that God will always help you to find the truth and he must live.

The next *superego* appears to give advice to Dantes that he should stop being angry. He also asks Dantes to begin to pray to God and hopes the miracle will happen.

The fourth *superego* comes to suppress the *Id* which wants him to die. The *superego* advises that he must live and struggle to very last. He is sure that he will win back the happiness of which he has been deprived.

The fifth *superego* appears to stop the *Id* by telling him not to exact vengeance. The God will punish the wrongdoer.

The sixth *superego* arises when Dantes's *Id* wants to harm the jailer. The *superego* tries to stop the *Id* by saying that there is no use to harm the jailer and if Dantes harms him, he will be moved to the creepy dungeon.

The seventh *superego* tries to deny the *Id* which asks Dantes to lie. The *superego* asks Dantes to tell the truth that he is just escaped from Chateau D'If.

The eighth *superego* appears to stop the *Id* which asks Count to refuse the food. The *Superego* says that he must eat and drink what the family serves to him as a way to respect the family.

The ninth *superego* comes to attack the *Id* which is asking him to get his revenge. The *superego* tries to stop the *Id* by using Mercedes' apology and tears. Mercedes asks him to stop the vengeance and forgives all his enemies. She also asks to spare her son life.

The last *superego* emerges to pressure the *Id* which wants to punish Danglars. The *superego* asks him to release Danglars, because he regrets for the mistake and calumny to him. Moreover, Danglars also seems powerless and mad.

The first *ego* follows the *superego* and denies the *Id*. The *Id* wants to get pleasure by asking him to plunge into the sea. However, the *Id* can be stopped by *superego* with his religious power. The *superego* says that God will always help him to find the truth and he must live. Thus, he does not plunge into the sea.

The next *ego* follows the *Id* and pushes away the *superego*. He does not receive the *superego*'s suggestion, because the *Id* strongly pressures the *ego*. He then loses his mind. He utters blasphemies to God and dashes himself furiously against the wall. The *Id* totally controls the *ego* and makes Dantes angry. The *Id* makes him fancy about his unknown persecutors who are punished with the most horrible tortures which are more painful than the death.

The fifth *ego* follows the *Id* which asks to get revenge and pushes away the *superego*. He will get revenge to make they feel his suffering.

The sixth *ego* strongly follows the *Id* to harm the jailer if his want is not obeyed by the jailer. He then forces him by lifting the stool and begins to throw away the stool to the jailer if he refuses. However, the jailer manages to escape and because of this, Dantes is moved to the dungeon.

The seventh *ego* follows again the *Id* and denies the *superego* to tell the truth. He then lies to the smuggler that he is a stranded one and his ship

is sunk. The *Id* says that he is hungry and needs to eat. Then, the *ego* pressured by the *Id* asks food to fulfill his hunger.

The eighth *ego* follows the *Id*'s wants and denies what the *superego* wants. The *ego* then refuses to receive and to eat any nourishment served by Morcerf's family.

The ninth *ego* follows the *Id* which beats the *superego*. The *Id* pressures the *superego* which asks him to stop vengeance by using the Mercedes' apology and appeal. The *ego* then follows the *Id* to continue the vengeance and it is impossible to stop. He cannot also spare her son life.

The last *ego* follows the *superego*, after he accepts the *Id* to punish Danglars. The *Id* wants to kidnap, blackmail, and suffer him in starvation. However, the *superego* manages to pressure the *ego* dominated by the *Id* by asking the *ego* to release him because Danglars has regretted of what he had done to Count in couple years ago.

2. Discussion

Count of Monte Cristo is described as the character who much suffers. In this novel, he experiences many internal and external conflicts which create conflict among the *Id*, *ego*, and *superego*. The structure of personality which often dominates among others is the *Id*. The *Id* often comes within Count's mind to pursuit his pleasure that is exacting vengeance and pushes away the *superego* from the *ego*. It makes Count out of control and breaks his religion norm. The *Id* then completely dominates the *ego*. Thus, it can be inferred that he is a man who *has a pleasure seeking personality*.

The *Id* pressuring the *ego* leads anger. He is angry, because he is attacked, tortured, and behaved inappropriately by his enemies. Vengeance which appears within a person' mind initiated by feelings of resentment, frustration, irritation, grief, anger, and hatred (Trechter, 45: 2011). When he is harmed, he then cannot tolerate those acts and will repay toward his enemies. The *Id* then pressures the *ego* again to exact retaliation in form of aggressive action. He thinks to give punishment to his enemies which is

equal or more deadly than his suffering. He gives punishment to make his enemies repent and know how it feels to be tortured and behaved inappropriately. This is then called as vengeance.

Count of Monte Cristo is formerly a poor sailor man. His true name is Edmond Dantes. When he is about to marry and promoted to be a new promotion as captain of ship. His jealous enemies (Caderousse, Danglars, and Fernand) write a fake letter about conspiracy of Bonaparte to the king's attorney. Because of this, Dantes is dragged into prison by Villefort, because he thinks the letter is dangerous to Villefort. Dantes then turns to be frustrated, despaired, angry, and miserable. Dantes thinks why he must be tortured. According to McCullough (2008: 39), the desire for revenge easily "comes when they feel that he is victimized, ostracized, criticized, or antagonized". Dantes becomes the victim of their tortures. Because of it, the fury and desire of paying back arises in Dantes' self.

In this novel, the way of Dantes to exact his vengeance is different with general vengeance which is usually direct, aggressive, and destructive. He exacts his vengeance indirectly. He firstly finds information of his enemies and then finds persons which are related to his enemies. It will make him easier to approach to his enemies. After that, he ruins slowly their life, career, families, and business. In the story, his two enemies are dead and the others are still alive, but mad. After his revenge totally finishes, the *Id*, finally, gets pleasure which is delayed for twenty four years. He feels satisfied and relief and succeeds to treat his traumatic sense. However, it is just temporary. The *superego* pressures the *Id* dominating the *ego*. The *superego* says that he is overwhelming. There are many innocent people who are deceased because of him. It makes Count feel guilty. He turns to be pale and despaired.

The researcher finds some previous literary works which has the same discussion about vengeance in *the Count of Monte Cristo*. Based on the previous study, vengeance does not always bring satisfaction for the doers, it only gives vague pleasure and even it can make the doer's

character worse and also another trouble. Thus, vengeance is a destructive attempt conducted by the victim, because the offender harms the victim physically and mentally. The victim then tries to give punishment to their enemies in order to make them repent (Gollwitzer and Markus, 2007: 840). Vengeance is commonly caused by harm, misdeed, and unfairness. It leads to aggression, international conflict, and death (McCullough, 2008: 61).

The person who becomes victim has a deep anger and will plan to avenge. He will release the anger and feels relief just by exacting revenge. Desire of vengeance can control the victim's mind to get revenge and he will think that he is subordinated and weak. Vengeance is very necessary for him. He cannot keep his misery in his mind, because it can blow out his mind. It also makes him sick, for example: insomnia, headache, and stomachache when he is in prison. Moreover, it can make him lose mind or stressful. In short, the desire for vengeance can create such a powerful psychological toxin that makes the victim sick (Karen Horney in McCullough, 2008: 6).

The *Id* tells the *ego* that he has to restore the integrity and self-esteem disgraced by his enemies and to change the enemies' perceptions that he is the one who is not appropriate to get tortured. It means that vengeance can restore the avenger's integrity and self-esteem (Keyishian, 1982: 21). Thus, after his vengeance is finished, he can be relief and satisfied from his mental illness.

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion, this study draws a conclusion that based on the psychoanalytic analysis, Count of Monte Cristo is a man who has a *pleasure seeking personality*. Count is the man who often follows the *Id*. The *Id* often appears to pressure the *superego* and influences the *ego* to do what the *Id* wants. Vengeance is necessary for Count of Monte Cristo to restore his self-esteem and to punish their enemies in order to make them aware of their mistakes.

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